United Nations S/PV.6656

Security Council

Sixty-sixth year

Provisional

6656th meeting

Friday, 11 November 2011, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Cabral	(Portugal)
Members:	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Mr. Barbalić
	Brazil	Mrs. Viotti
	China	Mr. Wang Min
	Colombia	Mr. Osorio
	France	Mr. Araud
	Gabon	Mr. Messone
	Germany	Mr. Wittig
	India	Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri
	Lebanon	Mr. Salam
	Nigeria	Mrs. Ogwu
	Russian Federation	Mr. Pankin
	South Africa	Mr. Sangqu
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Parham
	United States of America	Ms. Rice

Agenda

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506.

11-58922 (E)

Please recycle

The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of South Sudan and the Sudan to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Hervé Ladsous, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Ms. Hilde Johnson, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan, to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome Special Representative Johnson, who is joining today's meeting via video teleconference from Juba, South Sudan.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I give the floor to Mr. Hervé Ladsous.

Mr. Ladsous (*spoke in French*): Thank you, Mr. President, for this opportunity to brief the Security Council on the situations in the Sudan and South Sudan. Given the critical issues facing both countries and the significance of the peacekeeping operations there, I decided to conduct my first field visit to the Sudan and South Sudan, from 30 October to 6 November, in my capacity as Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations. My visit gave me an opportunity to meet with the most senior officials from both Governments and President Mbeki, who, as the Council is aware, is the Chair of the African Union High-level Implementation Panel.

I will begin by discussing the situation in Abyei. As Council members are aware, the North-South migration has begun and, for the first time, will involve crossing an international border. Specifically, the annual migration of the Misseriya nomadic community through Abyei has begun. Some members of the group, herding approximately 2,000 head of cattle, have reached the village of Goli, located 25 kilometres north of Abyei town. The entire group, numbering several thousand people, with hundreds of thousands of heads of cattle, is expected to reach the Kiir/Bahr el-Arab river by the end of December.

Given the ongoing presence of the Sudanese Armed Forces in Abyei, there is a real risk of serious violence during this year's migration if returning internally displaced persons attempt to prevent the migration. While President Salva Kiir assured me that his Government would guarantee the peaceful migration of unarmed nomads, there are signs that other officials in the south do not want the migration to take place, especially given the ongoing presence of the Sudanese Armed Forces in Abyei.

I visited Abyei and was deeply concerned by the extent of the destruction in the wake of the occupation by the Sudanese Armed Forces in May. At the same time, I was very impressed by the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) Force Commander and his staff. UNISFA has been fully deployed, with 2,894 military personnel, including the full troop strength of the second battalion. The deployment of the battalion's equipment and the construction of its company operating bases in the Northern Sector are progressing, while its personnel are facing extensive demining and engineering work.

The Force's engineers have rebuilt the Banton bridge, which I inaugurated on my way to Abyei. This has restored a key crossing point between Agok and Abyei town, which had been destroyed during the fighting in May and which will facilitate the return of displaced persons, humanitarian access and UNISFA operations. I should report, however, that President Al-Bashir has stated that the Sudanese Armed Forces would withdraw only following the establishment of the Abyei Area Administration.

(*spoke in English*)

With respect to the situations in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile, the Government of the Sudan has accused South Sudan of fuelling the fighting and providing direct support to the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA)-North, warning that continued support would have grave consequences for bilateral relations. President Kiir has denied support for the SPLA-North and has accused the Government of the Sudan of supporting insurgent groups in South Sudan.

During my visit, I of course strongly urged both sides to address those issues through peaceful negotiations and to make the compromises necessary to resolve them. I expressed the deep concern of this Council and of the Secretary-General over the recent increase in North-South tensions, as well as the continued lack of progress on Abyei and other post-Comprehensive Peace Agreement issues. I stressed to them, as was noted by Special Envoy Menkerios yesterday, that the only course of action available is to recommit to a peaceful negotiated settlement of outstanding issues and to an immediate de-escalation of the current tensions.

However, recent reports of bombings in the border area between Upper Nile and Blue Nile states, and of a cross-border attack today in Kwek, in Upper Nile, have added to these tensions. On 9 November, the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS) was informed by Government of South Sudan officials that up to nine bombs had been dropped in the area of New Quffa and Yafta, in Maban county, Upper Nile state, very near the border with Blue Nile State. The areas are gathering points for tens of thousands of refugees from the fighting in Blue Nile state. Humanitarian partners report that approximately 55,000 people, including refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons, are currently on the move as a result of the bombing.

Yesterday, UNMISS confirmed that the Sudanese Armed Forces dropped at least two bombs near the Yida refugee camp in the vicinity of an SPLA camp along the border between Unity and Southern Kordofan states, with unknown casualties. There are reports — still unconfirmed — of an additional two bombs dropped in the area. The Yida camp shelters approximately 10,000 people displaced from the fighting in Southern Kordofan. UNMISS has relocated at least 12 non-governmental organization and United Nations agency staff members from the area, and additional relocations are ongoing. The Mission is, of course, also working to verify the locations of the reported bombings.

Today, the SPLA reported to the media a cross-border attack by the Sudanese Armed Forces in Kwek, in the oil fields of Upper Nile state, causing up to 20 casualties. The Sudanese Armed Forces have since denied any responsibility for that attack, and the Mission is working to verify these reports and to evaluate any additional humanitarian needs in the affected areas. As a matter of background, prior to 9 July, both the Yida and the Quffa areas were close to SPLA Ninth and Tenth Division locations, which were largely composed of combatants from the Nuba Mountains and Blue Nile State.

As members of the Council are aware, yesterday President Kiir delivered a press conference to the diplomatic community in Juba. The conference was in part a response to the Government of the Sudan's letter of 4 November to the Council, and also covered the reported bombings along the border. President Kiir again denied support to the SPLA-North and reiterated his commitment to resolving issues with the Sudan through dialogue. He stated that the bombings were a violation of the territorial sovereignty of South Sudan and that the attacks were on civilian refugees from the fighting in Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan states. He reiterated his claim that the Government of the Sudan was supporting insurgent groups in South Sudan and warned of imminent attacks by militia forces in Maban county, Upper Nile state. While noting that his Government would not tolerate these activities, President Kiir stated that South Sudan would not be drawn into fighting with the North.

I believe that the situation in the Sudan and South Sudan is at a difficult juncture, with very low trust between the countries, heightened rhetoric, and mutual accusations of support to insurgencies in the territory of the other. In this environment, neither country is making sufficient progress towards building a strong and mutually beneficial relationship. Tensions along the border may also flare up into serious violence during the migration period, particularly in the Abyei area, from which neither side has fully withdrawn.

Bombings by the SAF in the border areas between Sudan and South Sudan are a major concern, not only for the relationship between the two countries, but also for the tens of thousands of civilians in the affected areas. While neither side appears ready to return to war, there is a concerning pattern of escalation and destabilization that could lead to large-scale confrontation and put more civilian lives at risk. It is absolutely imperative that both Governments take the necessary steps to de-escalate the situation, ensure that civilian lives are protected, and resume peaceful dialogue.

During my visit to the Sudan, I also spent a day in El-Fasher and Shangil Tobaya camp, and discussed

the situation in Darfur with a wide range of interlocutors. While the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) continues to do its best in particularly difficulties circumstances, I was struck by the differing perceptions of the situation on the ground on the part of key stakeholders. In reality, there has been progress, but at the same time real challenges continue to cause deep concern. It is true that the security situation has improved since the height of the conflict, and that the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur provides a framework and opportunity for concrete progress. Indeed, some internally displaced persons have been able to return to certain areas.

At the same time, however, new displacements have occurred in other areas, tens of thousands of internally displaced persons continue to live in difficult conditions in the camp, a number of armed movements remain outside the peace process, widespread banditry hampers civilian life, access remains limited in a number of areas, and much more needs to be done to address impunity. Moreover, with the end of the rainy season, renewed hostilities remain a real threat.

On the security situation, as members of the Council know, UNAMID was attacked twice in the past month, losing four peacekeepers, including one this past weekend. While the Government promised me its full cooperation in the investigation of the first attack, we remain deeply concerned about the need for further cooperation in creating a secure environment and bringing to justice those responsible for attacks on the United Nations.

(*spoke in French*)

The preparation of the road map for peace in Darfur, as requested by the Council, is an opportunity to bring the international community together to speak with one voice on Darfur. UNAMID and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations are working closely with our partners, including the African Union and the Special Envoys, in the preparation of the road map. At the same time, we continue to work our United Nations humanitarian partners and the African Union on the review of UNAMID uniformed personnel, which was also requested by the Council. In particular, we must bear in mind the need to formulate a common assessment of the situation on the ground and to strengthen our coordination mechanisms. We trust that these exercises will help us to establish a better coordinated international approach in support of the peace process, humanitarian assistance and early recovery in Darfur.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Ladous for his briefing.

(*spoke in English*)

I now give Mr. Ladsous the floor once again so that he may read out the statement of Mr. Menkerios.

Mr. Ladsous: I shall now read out the statement of Special Envoy Haile Menkerios.

> "I have just returned from several weeks of consultations with the Governments of the Sudan and South Sudan and with the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP) in support of the finalization of the post-Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) negotiations between the Sudan and South Sudan and of the implementation of the 20 June agreement on Abyei, and I am happy to brief the Council today on the state of these negotiations.
>
> "To date, a number of CPA benchmarks and critical post-CPA arrangements remain, unfortunately, unresolved and continue to be a major source of tension between the Sudan and South Sudan. These crucial matters include the resolution of the final status of Abyei, the holding of popular consultations in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile States, the demarcation of the border and the establishment of border-security mechanisms, as well as oil revenue-sharing and related transitional financial arrangements.
>
> "While engagement continues between the two parties to resolve these pending issues through dialogue, tensions have continued to be exacerbated by, first, the eruption of fighting in the areas bordering Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile States, as well as internal strife within some areas bordering South Sudan, with each country accusing the other of supporting its armed opponents; secondly, delays in the implementation of the 20 June agreement on an interim administration and security arrangement for Abyei; and, thirdly, similar implementation delays in demilitarizing the common border zone and starting joint monitoring of the zone, which the two sides had agreed to do.

"In Abyei, the overall dynamics on the ground have not changed significantly since 20 June, despite the timely deployment of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA). UNISFA reports that the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Sudan People's Liberation Army forces have remained, respectively, in the areas north and south of the Kiir River, although the Government of South Sudan has declared its readiness to withdraw completely should the North do so unconditionally, consistent with the stipulations of the agreement.

"The continued presence of troops from both sides in the Abyei area constitutes a major obstacle to the enforcement of the 20 June interim agreement and the implementation of the mandate of UNISFA. Furthermore, it is creating a tense security environment, affecting the return of internally displaced persons and the seasonal migrations of the Misseriya southward, which could escalate into conflict.

"The African Union High-level Implementation Panel recently submitted a compromise proposal aimed at resolving the remaining differences between the parties on the establishment of the Abyei Area administration institutions, which in turn could lead to troop withdrawal. The Government of the Sudan responded favourably to that proposal by nominating as the Chair of the Legislative Council a Misseriya from greater Abyei who is well known to South Sudan as the former Deputy Administrator of the Abyei Area. The mediation is still waiting for the official response of the Government of South Sudan and hopes to achieve progress on this issue in the coming days.

"The border region continues to be an area of heightened tensions between the two countries, owing, among other factors, to the respective military build-ups by both countries along the border, accusations of support for the respective insurgencies by both Governments across the border, and remaining disputes over border demarcation. The intensification of the Government of South Sudan's fighting against the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-North) in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile, and its spillover across the border in particular poses, as reports of recent bombings across the border attest, a dangerous threat that could draw the two countries into direct clashes.

"The two countries must be strongly advised to do everything possible to address their differences and differences with their internal opponents through political means, not through military force. As long as wars continue, innocent civilians will continue to suffer, as we have witnessed in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile as well as in the states in South Sudan where military confrontation with rebel groups has continued. Needless to say, the two countries should be strongly urged to refrain from any encouragement or assistance to each other's insurgent groups to wage war.

"The establishment of the joint border monitoring mechanism agreed upon by the parties on 29 June, including a 20-kilometre-wide demilitarized border zone, could help to address existing tensions and restore confidence. However, progress on the operational establishment of the border mechanism has been delayed by remaining disagreements over the delineation of the border line from which the border zone can actually be determined.

"The African Union Panel mediation has prepared and submitted to the parties an operational map proposing a temporary redeployment line to resolve this deadlock. Both Governments are currently assessing that proposal. The Panel intends to resume discussions on border security in Addis Ababa on 19 November. Should those discussions result in a mutually agreed zone and mutually agreed locations to monitor the border, the conditions would be right, I believe, for the Council to consider the expansion of UNISFA's mandate to include support for the border-monitoring mechanism as requested by the parties.

"As I mentioned earlier, military confrontations are still ongoing between the Sudan Armed Forces and the SPLM-North in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile States. It is increasingly clear that the Government of the Sudan and the SPLM-North are no longer committed to the 28 June framework agreement, as both parties are pursuing military options. Having previously rejected any international

mediation, the Government of the Sudan has agreed to mediation with the SPLM-North under the auspices of AUHIP, while it concurrently pursues bilateral discussions with Juba.

"However, both the Government of the Sudan and the SPLM-North have thus far relied on military means to improve their bargaining positions, and neither has to date shown a concrete commitment to a political path, towards mutual accommodation, that could have led to a cessation of hostilities. If the conflict continues in the two areas, and mutual accusations of support for each other's armed rebellion do not end, I would like to reiterate that there is a high risk of the fighting leading to localized confrontations between the two countries, thereby starting a dangerous pattern of escalation that could be costly in terms of human lives. The mediation has been engaged in discussions with Juba and Khartoum to de-escalate those tensions.

"The Sudan is currently affected by the negative economic impact resulting from the separation of the South. An agreement on oil revenue-sharing and transitional financial arrangements with South Sudan is thus the priority for the Government of the Sudan. Both parties have now submitted proposals to the AUHIP on oil revenue-sharing and transitional financial arrangements, which will be discussed as an element of a negotiation on all issues that is tentatively scheduled to start on 19 November.

"The Sudan and South Sudan are engaged today in negotiations under the auspices of the AUHIP to address pending issues between them, which we are actively supporting. This needs to be encouraged. However, at the same time, a pattern of escalating mistrust and tension that is of great concern for the future of peace and security between and within the two countries is also apparent, and the Council has to strongly warn against it. I would like to urge both countries to de-escalate this tense situation and continue to build upon both the bilateral dialogue they started at the highest level, at the summit between President Al-Bashir and President Salva Kiir last month in Khartoum, as well as the ongoing negotiations under the facilitation of the AUHIP. Both will lose from a confrontation, which would represent a threat not only to their respective populations but also to the entire region."

(*spoke in French*)

That concludes the statement prepared yesterday by Special Envoy Haile Menkerios.

The President: I thank Mr. Ladsous for reading out the statement of Special Envoy Haile Menkerios, who, unfortunately, could not be here today.

I now give the floor to Ms. Johnson.

Ms. Johnson: I wish to thank you, Sir, for the opportunity to provide this short briefing on the incidents that took place this week in South Sudan to supplement Under-Secretary-General Ladsous's briefing. We will provide the Council with more detail on what we have learned up to now.

On 6 November, a mission of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) visited New Guffa, in Maban county, on the border with Kurmuk county in Blue Nile State, in response to bombings reported by the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) on 2 September and 26 October. The situation was assessed as calm. However, two days later, the SPLA in Upper Nile State reported that Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) had conducted an aerial bombing of New Guffa and Yalta, in Maban county, at around 4 p.m. UNMISS followed up on that information, which was confirmed by the Maban county commissioner. The SPLA and the commissioner reported that the bombing was carried out by an Antonov aircraft, which dropped nine bombs that resulted in the death of one child and seven SPLA soldiers. Furthermore, they reported that six SPLA soldiers and seven civilians, including four women, were injured. Two non-governmental organizations (NGOs) present in the area have also confirmed the 8 November bombings. However, UNMISS has not verified those reports. The county commissioner requested assistance with the evacuation of about 29 casualties. UNMISS today evacuated 14 of the priority-one casualties, from Bunj to Malakal.

This morning, UNMISS received a report from a local authority that new bombs may have been dropped in the area of Guffa today. That has not been confirmed from other sources. We are now trying to verify the information. Reports indicate that people are moving away from Guffa towards Bunj, the county capital. Reportedly, there are already large numbers of internally displaced persons and refugees in Bunj

already, with increasing numbers anticipated. Humanitarian assessments and inter-agency teams are being sent to Bunj now. A mission to Guffa is also on its way to verify and assess situation on ground.

Yesterday, we received reports that between 2.30 and 3.00 p.m. Sudanese Armed Forces bombed the Yeda refugee camp, on the border between South Kordofan, the Sudan, and Unity State, South Sudan. The refugee camp is located in an area near an SPLA camp. According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other humanitarian agencies, five bombs hit the Yeda area, with two falling directly inside the perimeter of the yeda shelter site. One bomb fell near a temporary school. The number of casualties has yet to be confirmed. A bomb that fell in the market remains unexploded.

A rapid assessment by NGOs has so far found no casualties, but many remain unaccounted for. Reportedly, many fled when they heard the aircraft. The UNMISS Mi-26 helicopter, which had been delivering humanitarian supplies, left Yeda just moments before the bombing started. An UNMISS Mi-8 helicopter was on the ground at Yeda for a regular flight scheduled to that location. There is no damage to the helicopter, which was used to evacuate some United Nations agency and international NGO staff.

UNMISS is currently organizing the relocation of international NGO and United Nations agency staff from the area. It is also working to verify the locations of the reported bombings. In total, 26 people were relocated yesterday by two UNMISS flights, including 5 from the United Nations, 15 from NGOs and 6 other representatives of media and Government.

Fighting in Upper Nile State was reported by the SPLA on 9 and 10 November, allegedly between SPLA and rebel militias at South Kuek and Gabat. Both locations are in Manyo county, on the western side of the Nile river. UNMISS has not been able to verify those incidents. However, the SPLA is seeking assistance for the evacuation of SPLA casualties from both locations, which are being organized as I speak. Reportedly, the SPLA claims to have pushed the rebel militia groups back into Kordofan. UNMISS has been requested to assist the SPLA with the evacuation of 16 wounded from Renk. In doing so, we hope to confirm which rebel militia groups they were fighting.

SPLA spokesperson Philip Aguer today alleged that there had been fighting in Kuek following an attack on their base by Sudanese Armed Forces and so-called mercenaries, which started at 9.00 a.m. and lasted seven hours. They have also reported an alleged 18 deaths and 73 wounded, on both sides. Aguer also said that the SPLA expected more attacks in the Upper Nile area, motivated by Khartoum's desire to "take the oil fields". That echoed the words of President Salva Kiir, who made similar claims yesterday.

It is a significant concern that the rhetoric is heightened on both sides, the Republic of the Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan. The engagement of the Security Council in contributing to de-escalating the situation is very welcome, as Under-Secretary-General Ladsous so strongly emphasized.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Sudan.

Mr. Osman (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me to begin by thanking Mr. Hervé Ladsous and Ms. Hilde Johnson for their statements and the information they have provided.

I shall comment in detail on those statements by summarizing each piece of information that has been provided. However, I would first like to recall a fact that — with all due respect — all members of the Secretariat seem to ignore. From the very beginning of the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, the Sudan and its Government have underscored their commitment to a political settlement to the conflict between the north and the south. Today, I would like to reiterate here in the Council that we are committed to finding a peaceful solution to pending issues that divide the north and South Sudan.

It is clear to everyone that the establishment of the State in the south was an honest effort undertaken by the Government and leadership of the north, as represented by President Al-Bashir. The Council may not be aware of this but, following independence, the President visited the capital of South Sudan and reiterated his desire to cooperate with its Government. We had hoped those goodwill efforts would at least have been praised, or even welcomed.

We have no doubt about our unchanging position on finding a peaceful political settlement to all pending issues. Nevertheless, there are always two sides to a coin. Unfortunately, there has been little enthusiasm

among our brothers to the south since independence, as there should have been in order to strengthen efforts to build a modern and prosperous State in line with the aspirations of South Sudan for many decades. No member of the Council has called upon the Republic of South Sudan to concentrate its efforts on those endeavours, rather than embarking on stirring up tension and new wars. An example is the well-known meeting in Kauda that brought together the Government of the South and rebels in Southern Kordofan, Blue Nile and Darfur, which led to a political statement calling for military action aimed at undermining the Khartoum regime. Let us recognize these truths, which I have simply highlighted.

Tuning now to the briefing by Mr. Ladsous, before briefly commenting on it, allow me to reiterate our commitment to cooperating with the United Nations without conditions, first and foremost with the Security Council and the Secretariat, but also with peacekeeping missions. Not only did I personally supervise Mr. Ladsous's visit to South Sudan, but I also facilitated a meeting between Mr. Ladsous and the highest authority of the country, President Al-Bashir, who gave Mr. Ladsous a very warm welcome and recalled the information that I presented at the beginning of my statement.

With regard to Mr. Ladsous's statement about Mr. Salva Kiir's statement yesterday denying that the Government of South Sudan was supporting rebels in the north, Mr. Ladsous spoke in detail about the subject. In fact, I would have preferred for the detailed statement to have been made not by a representative of the Secretariat but by a representative of South Sudan.

Allow me to share three pieces of information with the Council about the Sudanese Government's implication in incidents in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile. The fourth battalion of the Sudan People's Liberation Army is fighting with all its equipment in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile. That battalion has deployed many tanks when the United Nations Mission in South Sudan was in the area. That information can be found in the Joint Military Commission's documents. That is clear proof of the support by the Government of South Sudan for the rebels and of the presence of its troops and military hardware in those areas.

Turning now to Ms. Johnson's statement, we thank her for her efforts in the recent past when she was part of a group that established the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. However, it seems that time changes everything. I listened to her detailed and focused statement, which made it seem as if she were advocating for the actions of the Government of South Sudan, as if air bombardments and military actions by the Government of the Sudan were being carried out against South Sudan. I would instead have preferred her to speak in the way she has in the past, when she behaved as a mediator who contributed to the conclusion of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. I would have preferred her to speak in a completely impartial manner, providing information — as it is her duty to do in the service of the United Nations — on the movement of the forces of the south and the military support of the south to rebel movements. She gave no information on that topic. Where is the credibility she has had in the past? I hope that time will not erode it.

Let me turn now to Abyei. Mr. Ladsous briefed us on the topic, providing true information about the numerous leaders of the south who refuse to facilitate the movement of the Misseriya tribe, who have lived in the region for thousands of years. That is another example of lack of cooperation on the part of the Government of South Sudan in averting military clashes.

With regard to mediation, let me note that we have always demonstrated our commitment to mediation under the leadership of Mr. Thabo Mbeki, our brother from South Africa, and he can confirm that. We participated in all meetings and workshops, whereas the other party was not always present and, when it was, did not always show moderation. We are ready to continue efforts under the mechanism led by one of our brothers on the continent to achieve effective solutions.

I now turn to developments in Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan. We have provided the Council with many documents and letters that give a detailed description of the root causes of the violence. The violence consists entirely of incitements on the part of the Government of South Sudan. In the Blue Nile region, elected Governor Malik Aggar has initiated the rebellion and taken up weapons, thereby destabilizing the State, which after intervention by Sudanese forces, is today returning to normal life, stability and security.

In conclusion, we affirm that the situation in Blue Nile state is entirely stable. We do not expect that the Sudanese Armed Forces will have to take military action, including aerial bombing, to deal with acts perpetrated by rebel movements, which have been contained in the past few days. In addition, as far as bombings are concerned, there have been no bombings on the refugee camps on the border between North and South. We are dealing here with half-truths — indeed, truths fabricated by the media across the board. We hope that the Council will not base its decisions on false information spread by the media, since it has mandated a mission in the Sudan capable of verifying such information.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of South Sudan.

Mr. Choat (South Sudan): I would like to thank Mr. Hervé Ladsous, Mr. Haile Menkerios and Ms. Hilde Johnson for their statements today.

The Republic of South Sudan is extremely concerned about the deteriorating security situation in the border areas of both the Republic of the Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan. Yesterday, the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) bombed Yida refugee camp in Unity state, South Sudan, and killed 12 people. In addition, the Sudan Armed Forces attacked the Sudan People's Liberation Army position in Kwek, Upper Nile state. There were approximately 20 casualties. The SAF also bombed Gussa in Maban county, Upper Nile state, and killed seven people.

We call on the Republic of the Sudan to desist from further military activity north or south of the border, and to avoid unnecessary escalation. As stated by His Excellency Mr. Salva Kiir Mayardit, President of the Republic of South Sudan, during his recent visit to Khartoum, the Republic of South Sudan is committed to resolving all outstanding issues peacefully and through dialogue — the opposite of what President Al-Bashir has been saying recently in threatening the South with a return to war. Blaming others for its own problems has been a feature of the Sudan's attitude.

We reiterate that the Government of the Republic of South Sudan's policy is one of total non-interference in the affairs of other States. All the accusations made by the Sudan are untrue. Naturally, we are deeply concerned about the situation in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile states, given their geographical proximity to our country. In particular, we are gravely concerned about the impact of the ongoing violence on the civilian populations of those areas.

We remain committed to full implementation of the provisions of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) relating to the two areas, not least the holding of popular consultations. We believe that it is the ongoing failure to implement the CPA provisions with respect to the two areas that is one of the main causes of the current situation.

Lastly, we call on the Council to take up with urgency the issue of humanitarian access to the two areas. The Republic of South Sudan stands ready to assist with the provision of humanitarian relief to all civilians fleeing conflict areas.

The President: There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 11.25 a.m.